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REV. CHARLES BRIDGES'

ADDRESS

TO ABOUT FIVE HUNDRED ASSEMBLED CLERGY,

AT THE

Annual Meetings in Dublin.

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A D D R E S S ,

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My beloved fathers and brethren, "I am with you in weakness and fear and in much trembling." I cannot but feel that I am standing before men at whose feet I should be glad to sit, and I can only thank you, dear brethren, for the sympathy of your prayers. I have longed to see you, not as though I could impart to you any spiritual gift, but hoping and trusting that we may be comforted together, by our mutual faith and love. And now that we have come together, by the will of God, I trust that we shall with each other be refreshed. We know that we have looked on you as a Church with sympathy and fellowship, as suffering that which we can well understand; we have seen you consecrated to the service of God with the especial marks of God's election, tried in the furnace of affliction with an especial mark of fatherly love, (for whom he loveth he chasteneth,) and we see that we can come to you, not to sympathise with your troubles, but to join in your songs of praise, for surely you are ready to say, that "we went through fire and through water, but thou hast brought us out into a wealthy place." Bear with me while I bring before you one practical recollection of the Lord's dispensation with me. The Refiner purifies the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of righteousness; and therefore we look to you to set before us and the churches of God the same holy moulding of the furnace, the same holy stand-

ard of the special power of the grace of God with you ; so that we ourselves may be instructed, and encouraged, and established by what we see, and know, and hear from you. Now, I would bring this to bear on the grand primary part of our work, and that is, the exalting of our dear Saviour in our ministry. This you know, dear friends, is the object for which we are to live—to set up Christ, and nothing else, before our people ; Christ, his blood and righteousness, the ground of our hope ; Christ, his quickening Spirit, the principle of life in our souls ; Christ, the way, the truth, and the life ; Christ, the refuge and consolation, the present, eternal salvation of his people. Ah, dear friends, when we look at the hopes of a fallen world, when we know that they are centered in him ; it is this that fixes our purpose, to “ know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified ; ” it is this that gives us our text, that furnishes the materials of our sermons, that brings out the commanding truths of the Gospel, that exhibits the Gospel before the church in a more vivid apprehension of glory in the person and work of our Saviour. I would just beg to set before you simply two points of moment in this matter, and that is, that our ministration in Christ should be a continually advancing ministration, and that it should be an entire ministration. Now you know, my friends, that the whole sum and substance of the Gospel, is one single sentence—“ Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ”—and yet, who is there of us that does not know that there is in that one sentence the infinite and eternal love of God—the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of that love which passeth knowledge ; and therefore, if we should be satisfied that our people should remain children for ever, why then, we may be content with giving them the mere elementary truths of this matter ; but if we really are ministers of Christ, we shall be going unto perfection, in the exercise of our work, not

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laying again the foundation so as to stop there, but to be going on as ministers as well as christians, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth in the path of the truth of God, to the things that are before? We are to "speak the wisdom of God in a mystery" to them that are perfect; we are therefore not to be satisfied with leading men to Christ, but we are to be building them up in their most holy faith: we are not to be satisfied with leading them to receive Christ Jesus the Lord, but also to walk in every ordinance, and be built up in him and established in the faith. This, my dear friends, I feel to be a matter of very primary moment; and it must lead us from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from year to year, to advance from the general statements of the matter into a minute, and explicit, and detailed, and enlarged exposition, not to set out merely the person of Christ, but as we find in the Book of Canticles, every feature of his person, and as we find in the Epistle to the Hebrews, all his divine mediatorial offices connected with his person. Now I really feel, while speaking, convicted and humbled before God; I often would have committed the ministrations of the last few years, though I believe they are accurate in their character, to the flames, if I did not feel that it was useful to myself to preserve such an humbling memory of scanty knowledge; if I did not feel that it might be important, by these means, to mark my continual progress in thought and experience, and if I did not think that I might make a valuable use of them in some future time, in filling them up with richer moulding, and the result of a more deep and experimental teaching. But, be that as it may, the real responsibility belonging to us is, not to preach merely, but to fulfil the word of God, that is, to make full proof of our ministry—to be going on in a course of expansion and enlargement, as the apostle mentions so very beautifully in that text which was for our consideration yesterday, "that we may present," not that we may bring our peo-

ple as children, but "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Now, might I just mark another point while on this subject, the great importance of being complete in our ministrations. You know the Gospel consists of three parts, suited to the complex character of man. There is doctrine for the head, experience for the heart, and practice for the life and conversation. Now then, take one of these things separately, and what a poor starving ineffectual ministration it is! what are doctrines without experience, but mere abstract theories or notions? What are doctrines without practice, but Antinomian ungodliness? So, again, take experience; what is experience without doctrine? Why, it is the mere religion of feeling—the religion of delusion—a religion that is merely foisted by excitement, instead of connected with principle—a mere *ignus fatuas* instead of the light of life, merely inducing confidence in the flesh, instead of rejoicing in Christ Jesus. And so again, what would be experience without practice? Why it would be a self-deluding religion, while the man would be the wretched victim of the delusions of his own heart. And so in regard to the other point; what would practice be without doctrine, but the body without the spirit, which is dead: and so, without experience, what would practice be, but mere external formality, without any of the peace or joy of believing in Christ? So that this, I think, will bring the matter to a very simple point, that we should direct and connect every feeling of the heart, and every obligation of the life, with an entire dependence on Christ, a continual comprehension of him; rejoicing, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, that all our springs are in him. And then, I will just mention this in another point of view. As far as my own experience and observation have gone, I have uniformly marked the irritability of unstable profession to be connected with partial views of Scripture, a sort of favouritism in Scripture; sometimes it is the part of Scripture which relates to general

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doctrines, sometimes to particular doctrines, sometimes it is the prophetic parts of Scripture, some of those parts that act more on the imagination than on the direct principles of conscience and conduct; but whatever it be, if it be partial, it is ineffectual; no matter which is the favourite part, we can never gain a stable profession, except we see the whole Christ, and the whole revelation of God: and I think, too, it bears this important responsibility with it. We know we beget our children in the Gospel; but we do more, we educate our children in the Gospel, and we must expect our children to bear the marks of our education, whether it be a wise and sound education, or whether it be a defective or eccentric education; so that for instance, under the latter circumstance, we are sure to see in our people some imperfect development of Christian character, or some spiritual deformity in Christian profession. Now I think, my dear friends, you must see from this, that it is no light matter to preach the Gospel of Christ; we find that it exercises the mind of the great apostle, "in all wisdom," he says, "to preach Christ, warning every man, and teaching every man." We find also, that it exercised all his energy as well as his wisdom, as he says, "whereunto I also labour, working together for the faith of the Gospel, according to his might which worketh in me mightily." Now I cannot but hope, my brethren, that our minds are deeply impressed with the grand moment of this matter; that it does command the best feelings and warmest glow of our hearts. But it calls for more than this; it calls for diligent responsibility, for the employment of all our talents, for the consecration of all the powers of man, for the redemption and improvement of time, and every thing that belongs to man, to be consecrated to the ministry of the Gospel. I cannot but say, therefore, that those who feel little preparation necessary for this grand and blessed work, have never yet realized

those views which we desire to impress on every one's mind. There is often great danger from fluency of utterance—a most valuable gift, as opening a communication from a well stored mind ; but without that resource, it is an evil of the greatest injury to individuals and also to the church; it leads to much harm—it leads, for instance, to a habit of saying a great deal, when we have very little to say ; it leads us to mistake a collection of words for solid instruction ; it exhibits a collection of duplicates, instead of a well assorted stock of knowledge, like an ill-furnished house, filled, we may say, with a multitude of articles, but all of the same kind : now it is plain, therefore, that whatever there may be for a little temporary interest and excitement, there is nothing here to feed the church of God—to feed the flock—that are committed to us. Why, whatever some may have thought about it, I confess, I should just as soon think of building a navy from the oaks of my own planting, or of building a house by my own personal, unassisted labours, as of going to the diversified cases of my own people with my own unassisted treasure, without previous preparation and study, as well as prayer. I remember an old writer asked this question, how can the people grow, if the minister does not grow ; and how can the minister grow, if he does not study to enlarge his treasure as well as refresh his own soul ? You know, that the nurse or mother who has an infant to feed, is obliged to feed more largely than others ; so we who have children languishing for food, must indeed have food to give them, or else both we and they will languish in consumption ; it is a responsibility resting on you all, who feel what a work the ministry is, to study and pray, and pray and study again ; and this way alone, I may expect to fulfil my own responsibility and to stand before my God, and render an account of my work ; in this way alone, may I hope to build up my people in the solid establishment of Christian profession, and be able to anti-

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cipate a joyous meeting with them, and they with me—perfect in that through the manifestations of the Gospel. I remember well that the special gift of God to his church, and the distinguishing marks of the pastor after God's own heart are these—they shall feed his people with knowledge and understanding; and I remember too that the inscription drawn of a well instructed scribe, is one who has a storehouse, and who is able to bring out of that storehouse things new and old; so that in the scriptural moulding of the Christian ministry, we feel that we have much responsibility lying upon us, and much and deeply indeed are we responsible from day to day to labour and pray—to labour and work, and concentrate all in our great and glorious object—saving souls, feeding souls, winning souls, and rearing families for heaven. I would only remark one more recollection on this subject—the *exceeding imprudence of neglecting the responsibility of this work*. What should we think of the man who was laying out more than he laid in? What should we think of the man who is laying out his capital without increasing it? Why we cannot but feel that that man is in the high road to bankruptcy. It is plain then, that while we have such demands on us for knowledge and wisdom, to direct and to control, to establish and to uphold, to comfort and to rebuke, and to exhort, we have indeed brought upon us all the responsibility that we have just been alluding to. Perhaps this may lead us to another point, very natural indeed—if we are to gain these stores, from whence are we to obtain them? Now, of course, we come first to the book of God; it is, indeed, the priest's book; the book to which we may well apply the rule of an ancient father—"There is no study so enriching as the deep, and diligent, and accurate, and meditating study of the word of God." There is an utter barrenness in all other studies, even if they be ever so accurate, if this book, in all its rich action, and

all its divine influences, be not the ground, and substance, and foundation of all. But oh, how barren is even the Book of God, if it is not read and studied on our knees? How utterly uninformative it is to us if we are not walking in fellowship with our dear Lord and Saviour? It is only when we are walking with him, and he with us, and opening to us the Scriptures, that our hearts burn within us. And so with regard to this point, I would just observe, that it is no trifling matter to sit down to the study of the word of God: there is a great deal of time frittered away, even in the reading of that sacred book; I feel deeply the responsibility and value of that rule, "let the word of God dwell in you richly, in all wisdom;" I feel, that that rule directs to the profitable study of the word of God; I have seen and heard sermons that are full of scripture, and yet that are most unedifying sermons; I have seen and heard sermons in which the sacred treasure has been largely drawn on, and yet they are profitable neither "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;" the power of the word of God depends not on the letter, not on the careless, promiscuous throwing in of a passage in a sermon; but on the way we direct a suitable and practical application. I hope I shall not be supposed to derogate from the entire sufficiency of the word of God, if I should shew the importance, as opportunity is offered and Providence should enable us, of pursuing more or less a course of sound theological reading. I feel that in so doing, I am in no respect dishonouring the perfection of the word of God; I feel that I am only revering and admiring the contemplation of that wisdom of God by which he has made man a helper to his fellow man; I feel that part of the delightful privilege of the communion of saints, is the communion and fellowship with that world of contemporaneous minds, which is embodied in their writings; and even though they be dead, we may say they speak to us, and we with them.

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I feel that our own minds, our own conceptions, obtain an enlargement, a simplicity, a more vivid power of interest and attraction, by the help we receive one from another, in a simple dependence on God, and a careful distrust of man, and in the habit of the soul to try every spirit by the word of God. But again, when we speak of the importance of concentrating study on the word of God and on the course that may be set before us; we are speaking, not of the posture of study, or of the time that may be given to it, but of the mind, concentrated, and fixed, and stable. You can easily conceive—I have no doubt of such a thing—of sitting at a study-table without thought, or our thoughts wandering to the ends of the earth, for want of the power or habit of concentrating them. We have sometimes known that the time of study is frittered away in preparing for study, and that all the while there is the chaining power of indolence shrinking from the decided habit of application and vigourousness of mind, equally repelling every effort of concentration; and therefore we see the great importance of considering the value of intellectual habits as means of an effective communication of truth. I have once or twice thought of recommending to my dear brethren, a work totally free from any glow of feeling, and therefore most uninviting in its form and character. I cannot but recollect myself the great value, in the establishment of my own mind, I derived from an attentive digestion of a very small but invaluable book—"Locke's Essay on the Conduct of the Understanding." I hope there may be no reluctance to discipline the mind into habits of thought, which will enrich the mind with a far deeper store of the word of God than ever was known or understood before. I would only just remark farther on this point, that if I could relieve any of my brethren from the dryness of such a book as that, I would just bring before them another book in which, according to the testimony

and verdict of Dr. Johnson, these principles are ramified and brought out with a glow of animation more suited to Irish minds. I remember, when I was a child, one who knew me best gave me "Watt's Treatment of the Mind." I never affect to be so old as not to derive new and increasing benefit from the repeated perusal of that inestimable book. Now, I hardly know, my dear friends, what I have more to say to you upon this matter, except one or two words of a local nature. I think that it is likely that my dear younger brethren feel some times a difficulty in persevering in habits of study ; and I tell you where this difficulty shows itself in a very natural, but a very hurtful way. Now, for instance, in the matter of choosing a text for our sermons, we are led, we will suppose to choose a text for the next Sabbath ministration, but, upon going through the text it does not seem so fruitful as we at first anticipated, or rather, it requires more labour and activity of mind and meditation than we feel either time or disposition to give to it ; and so, it very often happens, that this text, before the week is ended, is changed for some other text. Now, I cannot but think that that is a habit in young ministers to be watched and checked, with a most determined effort. If we select a portion of the word of God, as a minister ought to take it, (I suppose that we have taken it as the result of prayer.) I feel, therefore, that in that spirit we ought to consider it is God's text, and not ours—that it is God's appointed means of feeding our people on the next Sabbath. I conceive then, that any difficulty we may find in drawing out materials for that text, only just shews this, that the iron of our spade is somewhat blunt ; and you know the Scripture rule, if the iron be blunt do not lay it aside, but put out more strength ; and I conceive we shall never fail, even in all the difficulties that belong to even the minute exercise of our ministry, if we are living and acting in the spirit of our dear Master ; we

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shall "find grace to help in the time of need." Do we want more light? Shall we ever go to God and be disappointed of our hope? and then when we have gone to God, and removed that textual difficulty to which I have just referred, let us go to our people and break up the ground-work of our text in some simple application to some two or three of our people to whom it may be more directly applied, and it will be wonderful how we will break up the soil—how rich the soil will appear, how full of matter—how full of mind, and that mind the mind of God. With regard to the evil of indulging this changeable spirit, see the inroad it makes on the habit of mental perseverance, which is about one of the most valuable ministerial habits which our God and Father could infuse into us, and by the exercise of which, we not only enrich ourselves with the riches that had escaped our view, but we establish a habit of steadiness and application, which is increasingly valuable from month to month, and from year to year. I would just, in concluding this subject, again remark as to preparation—sometimes, a brother clergyman tells me, that he found himself greatly encouraged when he had made little or no preparation, as well as greatly strengthened when he had made very diligent preparation; and, therefore, the natural result, as it would appear from this, would be, it is better to make no preparation at all. Now just mark how exceedingly misconceived this view of the matter is; it is judging by feeling—by sense, instead of by the standard of the word of God. We are to walk by faith; and what is faith? Why, faith is the habit of diligence. God is the God of means; we trust God, therefore, in the use of means, and we tempt him in the neglect of them. I should really have thought of very little else than my own want of self-knowledge, if I were to judge of the fruitfulness of my own ministrations, by any such uncertain impressions from my own mind and feeling. I confess, my dear friends, in plain words, that habitually

to neglect diligent preparation for my work, would be insulting both God and my own people—insulting my God, in serving him with that which has cost me nothing—and insulting my people, in stunting their growth in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But those who neglect preparation have not thought so deeply on this matter as I trust they will think of it. We have little idea of what a personal loss it is to our own selves ; I can conceive of no more interesting exercise or enjoyment in the world than intellectual exercise and a spiritual habit on the deepest book in the universe of God ; I can conceive that where the heart and mind are both engaged, that there is no exercise of the inner man so rich in enjoyment, and so fruitful in blessing as our intense and persevering application of the mind, so as to point out and apply the word of God. Here is a field at once for the expansion of the most splendid intellect, and for the warmth of the most glowing heart. Now, just let me remark the great evil I have known to follow from the want of this exercise of the mind of the minister of God ; we see it in this respect : you will very often find a crude exposition of the Scriptures of truth. Oh, there is one responsibility that presses upon me more heavily than all—when I sit down with the word of God before me, that is, in the character of an interpreter, and it would really seem from an allusion in the book of Job, that it is a very difficult and rare character ; he calls it one of a thousand ; and undoubtedly, it is a character of deep and anxious responsibility. Now you know, to sit down and expand the mind of God—not to show what the Bible *may* mean, but what it *was intended* to mean—not to show what the Bible does mean, bearing out all that imagination might bring up, but setting forth the spiritual testimony of the living God ; why, the undisciplined mind is amusing the imagination and fancy, instead of being engaged in active meditation on the book of God. And so it very often happens, that in this mis-

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called spiritualizing of Scripture, one set of opinions are maintained by one party and the contrary opinions by the other. Now to refer to some of the doctrines of the word of God. Take that doctrine of the most exciting interest, the doctrine of the second advent of Christ. Oh, who of us does not know, that in the joyous anticipation connected with that holy doctrine, every thing is gloomy to him who is not illumined with the glory of this grand consummation! Every exercise of obligation, every endearing exercise of privilege, every enlivening hope is linked to this blessed and glorious doctrine; but how has it been—I had almost said, murdered!—how has it been, that that which was a bond of union should be made by the subtlety of the enemy, acting on the undisciplined mind of man a bond of disunion, so that brethren are set one against another in the very recollection, that the coming of the Lord draweth near. For instance, how very differently have the points connected with this doctrine been treated. There is one, the proselyte of a lively fancy, who enters into details of this day, and brings it out as if passing before us; another man of calculating mind takes his dates as if they were as certain as Daniel's weeks; and another man concentrates all his mind and interest on the mode, whether it is a spiritual or personal reign, or as to the time, whether it is to be pre-millennial or post millennial. Now, these I admit, have their relative importance; but I fear they have too absorbing an interest; and I feel constrained to give my opinion, that far too great stress has been laid on the circumstances; and the spiritual contemplation of the glory of the grand event far too much overlooked and made little of, for want of discriminating, what are the points of forbearance—what are the forbearances of faith—and so, the pure, real, practical influences of the doctrine have been diverted into a speculative channel. Curiosity has been fed, instead of faith and love; and

the consequence is, that the real heavenly glory has been painfully clouded. I have fixed it in my own mind most deeply that the real power and practical influence of this great matter is linked, not with the appurtenances of the doctrine, but with the believing apprehension of the event itself. I would remark also that if we are resting too strongly on practical inferences, on uncertain calculations, we are taking the foundations of our faith from the simple resting on the testimony of God. I remember that the early Christians realized the nearness, in contemplation, of the event, even as we do now, when the event itself was actually distant. They realized as we alone ought to realize it, in the very exercise of that faith which is "the substances of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"—with that faith which sees as with the eye of God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and in this exercise of living faith we rejoice that "now is our salvation nearer than when we believed;" and we shall exercise ourselves in a posture of waiting, in the joyous anticipation of that event which will raise our grovelling souls from earth to heaven, "from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Now, allow me to mention two or three practical recollections; and I hope that God will enable me to speak of myself while I am speaking to you. I am sure there is not one among you who needs a word from God more than I do; and I never could stand up before you, if I did not hope that my God would speak the word to me, that I desire to speak to you. Well, then my dear friends, let us remember the great importance of living in the spirit of our ministry. I wish to connect these last meetings with our present meeting, and I would just say here, how clear it is, that if you and I are living in the spirit of our work, we must grow in grace, and in the

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knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must study Christ, to preach Christ. What is the spirit of our work? Improvement,—“we beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord;” and you know what is the fruitful result as well, or better than I do. “We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord;” and, therefore, if we are at a stand still in our ministry, if even we are stationary in our statements and character as ministers, I am afraid there is a neglect of the study of Christ, because I am sure we can never study Christ without having the moulding of his Spirit in our own souls, and communicating a rich mould into our own ministrations. We know if we are living in the spirit of our work, we should be like Moses, going up to God; we will receive our message afresh from God: and then, surely, when we stand up before our people, our faces must shine before them: we cannot, you know, go up to God without receiving from him: and then as we receive mercy from him, we have mercy to impart to our people, and so we sow together and rejoice together, and so, as it regards, the spirit of our work how plain and simple it is just to remember that our privileges, our dignity, our happiness, all center here, having but one object, living for that object, and subordinating every thing to exalt Christ. This is the object for which we are separated, the faith for which we were consecrated, the faith in which we live, and hope to die. I find from my own experience, and I have no doubt but you find the same, that all our personal spirituality, all our ministerial effectiveness depends not upon talent, not upon advantages, or endowments, not even upon exemplary diligence and conscientiousness, but upon the simplicity and godly sincerity with which we devote every feeling of our heart, every exercise of our mind, and every expression of our soul to this one subject. We may depend upon it that divine

influence will be manifested on our own character when we are simply devoted to exalt our Master. But then, it is not pulpit work, though it must be and ought to be the work of every pulpit ; but it is the exhibition of our character before our people that is required, we must be living epistles of our ministry ; they cannot understand our ministry, except it be seconded by our profession ; and then, when they see the holiness and blessedness of it in us, it will be a powerful means to draw them to the Saviour, and to bring them into union with him ; we cannot maintain the spirit except we are separate from the world. Oh, how hard it is to be in the world without being mixed up with its formality ! How hard especially it is, I have no doubt, to live in such a country as this, and to be separated from the spirit of party ! While you are obliged, in the exercise of your rights, connected as they are with the preservation of your religion, to adhere to one party, let it be your daily care, in the exercise of watchfulness, to be separated from the spirit of party. What have we to do with the politics of this world, but to say, "let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth, woe to the man that striveth with his Maker." What is our Lord's message to us ? "Let the dead bury their dead, but go you and preach the kingdom of God." And then, as it regards the character of the spirit of our ministry, time does not allow me, and ignorance of this country does not allow me to enter on this point ; all I will say is this, that the minister who is most full of tenderness, of yearning sympathy, affectionate confidence, self-denying tenderness, and devotedness, to the immediate interests of the people, is the minister that will make us one in them, and make them more or less one with us. I will just touch on another consideration. I feel the importance, I hope I shall not be open to misconception when I speak of it, I feel the importance of *steadily carrying*

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on the work upon our own platform. I do set my seal to every word of my dear brethren ; one object I had in desiring to see and visit you, was, under God, to link myself with you, in affectionate, *increasing attachment to our own church*. (hear, hear.) If a somewhat different system of discipline may open a wider door for the preaching of the Gospel in your own land, as far as it would be consistent with canonical obedience and Christian consideration, I pray God to bless you a thousand fold ; and I have no doubt that in diligently waiting upon God, many a door that may now be shut up may be opened ; that stumbling blocks that now hinder, may be removed ; only remember the word of wisdom and the word of God—" he that believeth shall not make haste." *I do feel the great importance of Christian order in a Christian Church*. I remember it was a matter of joy to the apostle, that he beheld the order of the Christian Church ; and he had good reason for it, for he knew in his own mind that it was connected with steadfastness of faith in Christ. I do feel there is great need of caution, lest a relaxation of discipline may produce a relaxation of the whole system ; I do feel that the more liberty you have over your English brethren, the more watchfulness you have need of, that your liberty do not degenerate into disorder. I would intreat you to consider the importance of joining with the general preaching of the Gospel the distinct doctrines of your own church. You will never be at a loss in preaching Christ, *while you have such a system of doctrinal articles with which your church furnishes you, to be the foundation of your Gospel ministrations*. You never need fear your love of souls being deadened, or your love of your Saviour being weakened, *while in this church and in connection with these responsibilities and those ordination engagements which are specially binding on the members of the establishment, you preach the Gospel on the plat-*

*form of the Church of England. I want no broader platform than this, as I feel that this platform saves me from wandering into the field of error, and it affords me the privilege of identifying myself with all those sympathies of my dear brethren in this country, who are living and working, and serving God, and exalting Christ upon this same interest with me. Now, another consideration, and I have done. I cannot forget to say a few words on the trials of your own ministry. As a church, I say, you are in the furnace, and perhaps you may say that the furnace is heated "seven times more than it was wont to be heated;" be that as it may, a hair of your head will not be singed, for the Son of God is walking with you, to save you in the hour of conflict. You are on the conquering side, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head"—the victory is sure—the battle of our Gideon will be fought, and the crown will be ours for ever: "Be thou faithful unto death, and Christ will give thee a crown of life." And as it regards individual trials, *live as Christians*, and we shall never be discouraged in our ministry. *Live as Christians*, a life of faith on the Son of God, and you shall be able to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life: we have such a witness, and have received such mercy, that now can we faint!*

Remember it is your privilege to rejoice in hope. Wherever we are, we must expect trials, but they should not cause us to leave our work; they are sent to bring us nearer to our God, and strengthen the joyous expectation that belongs to us, as partakers of the sufferings of Christ; and when he shall appear, we shall be like him, and may be glad also, with exceeding joy.

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